

People need affordable, reliable energy. Traditional energy projects are still the most affordable, still the most reliable.

If we really care about the people in developing countries, then we ought to help them turn on the lights. So I urge the Biden administration to reverse course, to rethink this, to look at all the implications of the decisions they are making.

We need to stop this senseless attack on energy jobs. We need to stop this reckless attack on developing nations. We need to stop pushing our allies into the waiting arms of the Chinese Communist Party.

The American people and our friends around the world—we are better than what we are getting right now from this administration, and we need to reverse course.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 4 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:07 p.m., recessed until 4 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. KELLY).

EXECUTIVE SESSION—Continued

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 9, Jennifer Mulhern Granholm, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Energy.

Charles E. Schumer, Cory A. Booker, Jon Ossoff, Richard Blumenthal, Richard J. Durbin, Alex Padilla, Christopher A. Coons, Margaret Wood Hassan, Sheldon Whitehouse, Robert Menendez, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Tim Kaine, Tammy Baldwin, Ron Wyden, Mazie Hirono, Tammy Duckworth.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Jennifer Mulhern Granholm, of Michigan, to be Secretary of Energy, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK), is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. HASSAN). Are there any Senators in the

Chamber wishing to vote or change his or her vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 67, nays 32, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 65 Ex.]

YEAS—67

Baldwin	Hassan	Portman
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hickenlooper	Risch
Booker	Hirono	Romney
Braun	Hoeben	Rosen
Brown	Johnson	Rounds
Burr	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	Kelly	Schatz
Cardin	King	Schumer
Carper	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Casey	Leahy	Sinema
Collins	Lujan	Smith
Coons	Manchin	Stabenow
Cornyn	Markey	Sullivan
Cortez Masto	McConnell	Tester
Cramer	Menendez	Van Hollen
Crapo	Merkley	Warner
Daines	Murkowski	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wyden
Feinstein	Ossoff	Young
Gillibrand	Padilla	
Grassley	Peters	

NAYS—32

Barrasso	Hagerty	Rubio
Blackburn	Hawley	Sasse
Blunt	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Boozman	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Capito	Kennedy	Shelby
Cassidy	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	Lummis	Toomey
Ernst	Marshall	Tuberville
Fischer	Moran	Wicker
Graham	Paul	

NOT VOTING—1

Warnock

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 67, the nays are 32.

The motion is agreed to.

The Senator from Iowa.

BIG TECH

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, last week I held 12 meetings in Iowa. Those meetings are for the purpose of having dialogue with my constituents, mostly answering their questions. As many of my colleagues know, I hold face-to-face meetings with Iowans in all 99 counties every year. It has been a privilege to get to every county in every corner of the State every single year for the past four decades.

People have asked me why I do this. The simple answer is, in our system of self-government, I am one half of a representative government; my constituents are the other half. My county meetings are a good way for me to keep in touch and see for myself the challenges and successes going on in communities across my home State. In recent years, it has become an important way for me to counter disinformation, correct misinformation, and sidestep censorship that Americans digest daily in the mainstream and social media.

Big tech and big data companies, much like State surveillance and Big Brother, share something in common: If left unchecked, Big Tech can undermine the privacy, civil liberties, and constitutional freedoms that every American should hold sacred and should never take for granted.

Responsible digital citizenship is more important now than ever, par-

ticularly with the censoring that is going on. Consumers must be mindful about their digital footprint. Anything typed into a search engine is effectively a digital diary, saved in the cloud for some rainy day. Consumers must be mindful about what is posted, what is downloaded, what is shared, and what is liked on social media platforms.

The road to responsible and accountable digital citizenship isn't solely the consumer's responsibility. Social media companies, as well as content and internet providers, are not exempt from ethical corporate stewardship, especially when the welfare of the next generation is at stake. Keep in mind that human trafficking is a pervasive crime that grooms and blackmails young people on Main Street but also in online communications.

However, having said all those question marks about Big Tech, I think we all realize that Big Tech isn't all bad. Technology companies have revolutionized our way of life and how we connect with friends and family. During the pandemic—and we are still in that pandemic—technology delivered invaluable connections for e-commerce, for digital learning, for teleworking, and for telehealth. However, that doesn't give big tech and big data companies license to undermine constitutional protections or disregard harmful impacts their products and services have on civic life and public trust in our American democracy. Titans of technology need to take responsibility for the products they build, sell, and profit from fellow Americans.

Policymakers and regulators have a duty to shape and enforce the rules of the road. Big Tech and all of its stakeholders, from content makers, social media platforms, and internet service providers, all bear responsibility to understand how their business model puts freedom at risk. Red flags are popping up all over the digital frontier, from recurring data breaches to online censorship, misuse of user profiles, and the recent mess with an online brokerage app.

In the last two Presidential elections, Big Tech has had a big influence on information that appeared or didn't appear in Americans' social media feeds.

Big Tech can't hide behind its business model when its revenue streams cash in on an infrastructure that sows division and distrust among Americans. This ecosystem has been exploited to radicalize political extremism and mobilize civil unrest. Social media companies have reaped the benefits of their enterprise, so these companies bear some responsibility to help repair cracks in the architecture of our civic institutions and also to heal the wounds festering in American life.

Our economic freedom allows social media companies to create a business model that grows their bottom line. Americans need to understand their personal data is harvested for profit.

Advertisers buy the data to influence consumer and voter behavior. The bottom line for every American ought to be ensuring that constitutional protections aren't archived—out of sight, out of mind—in the annals of history.

I am not saying Big Tech is a bad actor, but I am calling on Big Tech to be a good actor. Take responsibility for the online ecosystem you created.

Congress also must take a good, hard look at this famous section 230 we all talk about that has given these platforms great protection—more protection than they probably deserve—and whether, in regard to section 230, there is a need to reform immunity laws on the books. I think there is great reason to do that.

We have seen what happens when conversations take place online versus in person. Take it from me. The tone of conversation was neighborly and civil when I talked with these Iowans last week in Forest City, IA, or Ogden, IA, to answer their questions. However civil that is, it is sure offset by the incivility on these platforms. Incivility outflanks kindness, I think, tenfold in the responses posted on my Twitter account.

We need to work together to heal the unholy civil divide that has taken root online. It is bleeding into our way of life, pitting neighbor against neighbor, and harming the ability of elected leaders to build bipartisan consensus for the public good.

I am here to put social media platforms, the mainstream media, Congress, and the American public on notice: The digital landscape needs a reboot. What we do with this space will influence how young people participate in civic and political life for generations to come.

So, in closing, in the coming days, I am going to have more conversations with my colleagues on this through a series of speeches. I will be talking more about social and mainstream media, censorship, and freedom of speech, particularly on college campuses.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SMITH). The Senator from Maryland.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, each February, we mark Black History Month by coming together to highlight the achievements and contributions of Black Americans to our national story and remember the centuries of struggle that have shaped our society.

At every turning point in American history, Black American achievements and calls to action have driven our Nation's cultural, economic, and social progress forward, helping to hold to account the promises of freedom and equality for all people that our founding doctrine failed to uphold.

For too long, this history and the names and faces of those who marched, sacrificed, and fought for change have been obscured by prejudice and hate. It is our charge to remember those who

marched for justice and the forces they marched against.

When we ignore the injustices of our past, we cannot make amends in the present. The consequences of such inaction are grave and live on in present day: the ongoing racial and religious profiling, brutality, and killing of Black Americans by police; the high rates of COVID-19 transmission and death in Black communities; and the disproportionate impact this current economic crisis has had on Black workers and Black-owned businesses.

The unemployment rate for Black workers reached 9.9 percent, for instance—far beyond the national average of 6.7 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

These issues, including the broader economic and health consequences of the pandemic, result from systemic failures in place far before the current crisis, and they threaten to worsen racial gaps in wealth, health outcomes, and opportunities for years to come.

Last year, our Nation's fight against racism gained new urgency by a police officer's callous killing of George Floyd in May. The Trump administration and law enforcement's response to peaceful protests further displayed the double standard that still exists in our society today. Protesters were attacked with tear gas and rubber bullets across the Nation and here in our capital as they organized and marched to make it known that Black lives matter. We watched on television as the National Guard forcefully removed peaceful protesters from Lafayette Park to make way for President Trump to walk to St. John's Episcopal Church for a photo op. President Trump brandished a Bible in front of the church while he continued to fan the flames of bigotry, hate, and racism.

The historic election of KAMALA HARRIS as our Nation's first Black female Vice President serves as a reminder of the power of collective action. The Biden-Harris administration gives us opportunity to take meaningful action in government to create a more just society. In the year ahead, we must work together to advance the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act to bring accountability to law enforcement and the JOHN LEWIS Voting Rights Act to combat voter suppression and restore the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

It is our charge to mobilize all levels, from our communities to the Oval Office, to advance social, economic, and civil rights and justice to all Americans. It is time to expel all remaining vestiges of slavery and White supremacy that continue to plague our Nation.

As our National Youth Poet Laureate Amanda Gorman said so eloquently in her inaugural day address, "[B]eing American is more than [just] a pride we inherit, it's the past we step into and how we repair it." Black History Month is a reminder to look to this past and to act on our responsibilities in the present to make our Nation a better place for all of us.

We are still fighting against the vestiges of the institutions of slavery, of targeted violence and resistance in the Reconstruction and the Jim Crow eras, and of the tactics to keep Black Americans from the polls and out of government.

They are not merely footnotes in our history textbooks; they are the lineage of our Nation, the obstacles that have left millions of our citizens behind in the effort to obtain the American dream.

The realization of justice and true equality depends on our work to build a country committed to righting historic wrongs, closing gaps in the opportunity to achieve, and dismantling vestiges of inequality in our foundations. The 28 days in February must set the tone for the entire year—a continued commitment to justice, equality, and opportunity.

Celebrating Black experiences and culture contributes to the greatness of our diverse society. Such a celebration is aspirational, highlighting one of the many fundamental components that make this Nation a beacon around the world despite our flaws.

For the past 40 years, House Majority Leader STENY HOYER celebrated Black History Month by hosting a breakfast for political and civic leaders and inviting illustrious keynote speakers. Past speakers included then-Senator Barack Obama and Congressman John Lewis. Congressman ANTHONY BROWN joined the effort to bring so many of us together for this 40th Annual Black History Month Celebration and featured Vice President Harris as the honored guest and keynote speaker.

I would like to acknowledge the planning committee for this year's event, including Jackie Rhone and the former chair, Betty Richardson. Through their hard work, the celebration is a true success that everyone who participates looks forward to year after year.

This year's event focused on the identity, representation, and diversity of the Black family. Maya Angelou once said:

I sustain myself with the love of my family.

The lasting bonds we have with our families sustain us through life. For many, our families serve as our home base through times of triumph, trial, and tragedy.

The past year was a tumultuous year, from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disproportionately harmed African Americans much more severely than others, to the resounding calls for racial justice and racial equity, which have long been overdue. Through all of the turmoil, 2020 brought us together to appreciate and celebrate the gifts of life, family, and diversity. As we celebrate Black History Month and moving forward, we can recommit ourselves to promoting and celebrating diversity and advancing civil rights in our society. Black history is American history. It is a story of oppression, struggle, and, if we are to be true to our founding premise, redemption and equality.